



Community - Unity - Opportunity

A Note from Mrs Bonnington

I want to start by thanking all members of the school community for your support this term. Oaklands is a truly unique and special place, and this is thanks to each and every one of you.

As we journey through Advent, a season of hope, preparation, and joyful expectation, our school community has been blessed with many opportunities to grow together in faith and fellowship. Each activity this term has reminded us of the light we are called to share with the world.

Our Carol Service was a beautiful moment of reflection, where voices joined in harmony to proclaim the coming of Christ. Music and prayer are powerful ways to prepare our hearts during Advent.

In the classroom, students have embraced curiosity and innovation in all curriculum areas. Just as Advent calls us to look forward with anticipation, these activities encourage us to imagine and build a brighter future.

On the sports field, our teams have shown resilience, teamwork, and joy. Advent teaches us patience and perseverance, and these fixtures have been a living example of those virtues in action.

Our student leaders have stepped forward with courage and service, guiding their peers and strengthening our community. Their example reflects the Advent call to prepare the way for Christ by serving others with love.

Christmas is about giving, and our school community has contributed to several charities this term. Operation Christmas Child Shoebox appeal was extremely successful, as was our reverse advent calendar and fundraising for our partner school St. John's in Korogocho. Thank you all for your kindness and generosity.

Together, these experiences remind us that Advent is not only about waiting; it is about active preparation, growth, and sharing our gifts. May this season inspire us all to carry the light of Christ into every part of our school life.

I wish you all a wonderful Christmas and Happy New Year.

Mrs Bonnington, Head of School





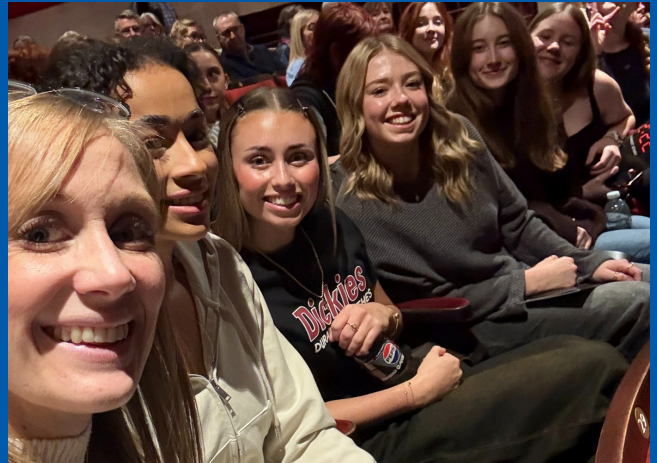
Performing Arts @ Oaklands



The Performing Arts Department have been busy this term.

GCSE Drama Trip

Recently, Year 11 GCSE Drama students went on a curriculum trip to the Mayflower Theatre in Southampton to watch a thrilling performance of 2:22 A Ghost Story.



The trip offered students an exciting opportunity to experience live theatre and deepen their knowledge and understanding of performance techniques ahead of their exam. The small cast of four enabled the students to experience a more intimate play and focus on each individual character.

From the moment the lights dimmed, the students were drawn into the tense atmospheric world of Jenny and Sam. The clever use of sound, lighting and timing, particularly the famous 2:22 moment, kept the audience on the edge of their seats throughout.

The performance provided a powerful example of how pace, staging and emotion can be used to build suspense and engage an audience. The students were able to see how the techniques they had studied in class were applied at a professional level and how a naturalistic set looked on stage.

I am very proud of the students and how they conducted themselves on this trip. Not only did they fully engage with the theatre experience, but they demonstrated excellent theatre etiquette and represented our school impeccably.

Mrs Blackburn



Sounds of the Season - Peri Concert

The Christmas Concert on 11th December was a huge success, with a range of solo, small groups, and large group performances taking place under the lights. Oaklands Band started the evening off, with the yearly Staff and Student Chamber Choir closing the first half.

The audience left with smiles on their faces, after a showcase of exceptional talent from the students.

'It was so fun. It was really nice to perform my piece that I have been practicing for a while. Hearing the crowd give a round of applause made me very proud!' Amy 8TE

This half term, Year 7 have been getting into the Christmas spirit with carol singing in preparation for the Carol Service which took place on 16th December. They learnt traditional carols, and some new festive songs, ready to perform as part of the service. Their performance was brilliant in adding something special to a magical and holy evening.

Oaklands Band - On the Road

We also embarked on an Oaklands Band mini-tour in November! Visiting two local infant schools, and providing them with a live musical experience. The students wowed with a setlist including Happy, Crocodile Rock, Brave, and many more! Oaklands Band meet every Friday in C3, and are always happy to accept new members! Spike Williams, the drummer for the band, said:



'The trip was an amazing experience. It gave me the opportunity to play music with lots of other musicians and perform in front of an audience. Mr Marshall explained the instruments to the children which gave them a good insight on the different types we played. Overall it was a fun experience for us students and for the children we played for.'

From the Chair of Governors

As we approach Christmas, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight and thank everyone at Oaklands for all of their excellent work during this first term. Whilst this is primarily aimed at all our staff, I would also like to thank the Governors who have made many visits to the school, attended meetings and volunteered their time to support Oaklands and by fulfilling the government's governance requirements, ensuring Oaklands is a school you would want to send your children to.

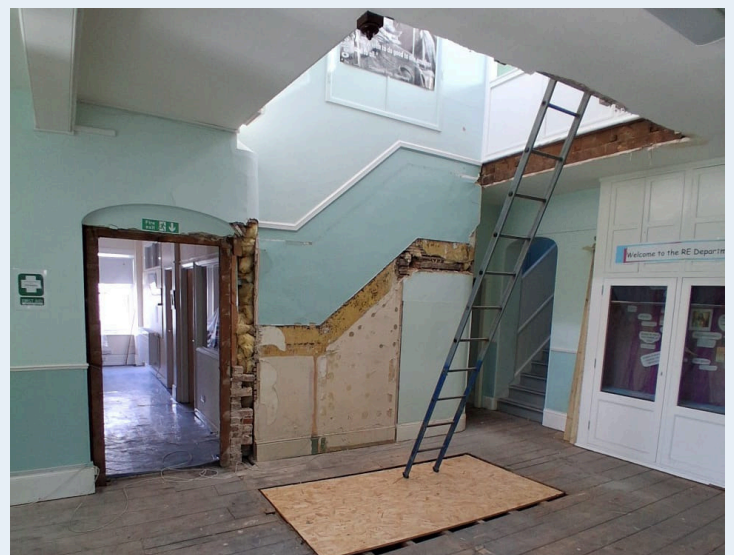


There have been several changes; the new leadership structure, new roles and responsibilities, and the challenge of providing high quality Catholic education while a major building project is underway. Everyone has adopted a 'can do' supportive approach, which exemplifies the best of Oaklands. I am delighted to say the building work is progressing well; the governors are all very proud of these renovations as The Governors' School Development Fund (GSDF), added to the government grant, has made this vital work possible. Thank you to all the parents, carers, and friends who contribute to the GSDF.

We would be delighted if more parents, who feel able, could contribute to this, it makes a real difference to the education of all children here. Even small amounts can quickly accumulate into a useful sum. If you would like to start contributing to the fund for the next project please visit our [Just Giving](#) page.

It just leaves me to say thank you again, and wish you all a very happy, peaceful and relaxing Christmas and New Year.

E Cluett, Chair of Governors



OFPA News

We would like to thank all those who bought raffle tickets and donated prizes for our Christmas Hamper Raffle. We raised £498 for the school.

Congratulations to our winners who received these beautiful hampers.



The Christmas Concert was our last event of 2025. It was a beautiful evening which showcased the breadth of talent in the school. Thank you to all those who purchased refreshments and 50:50 lottery tickets.

Congratulations to our draw winner who pocketed £66 in time for Christmas!

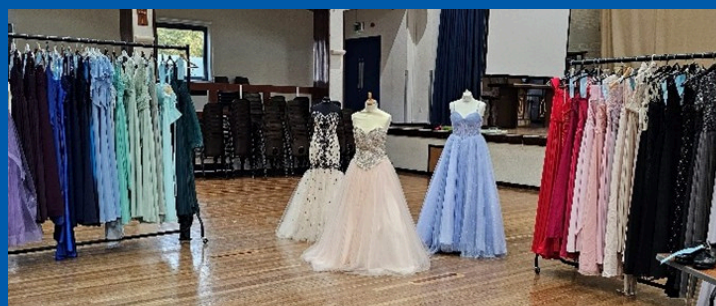
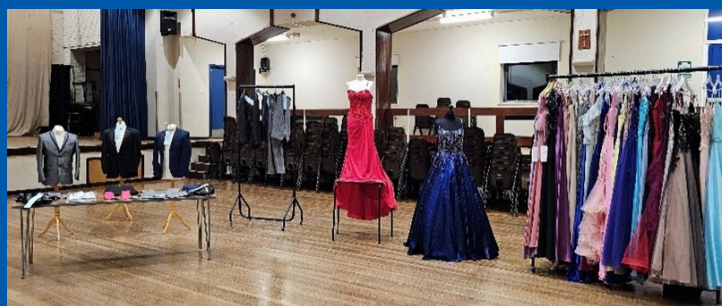


During 2025 the OFPA has funded a visit from a Holocaust speaker; Handball goals for the PE department; a Shakespeare walking tour for A-Level English Literature students; the Sixth Form visit to Oxford University; and we are supporting the initial funding for a Forest School project on site.

We have also donated £1000 to the Hardship fund which supports families who may struggle with the cost of school equipment, uniform, educational trips, and bus passes for students to get to the school.

Our first meeting of 2026 will be held in the Sixth Form Common Room on Monday 5th January at 7.30 pm - please come along and join us. There will be tea and biscuits.

Following the success of our November event, we will be holding another Prom Attire Sale on Monday 2nd February between 6.00 and 8.00pm in the hall instead of our February meeting.



STEM @ Oaklands

Year 10 STEM Day

Year 10 launched their STEM Day with an exciting introduction to analytical chemistry, exploring the vital role of an Analytical Chemist and the importance of scientific testing. Students applied their circuit-building knowledge and problem-solving skills to design and construct a working colorimeter from scratch. Using Lego, basic circuit components, LED lights, and multimeters, they successfully brought their devices to life.



Once completed, students used their colorimeters to produce calibration curve graphs and analyse a range of “unknown medicines,” determining whether they were safe and suitable for use by carefully following the guidelines in their booklets.

Throughout the day, Year 10 demonstrated outstanding scientific skills, teamwork, and collaboration. Many students went on to complete detailed scientific reports, mirroring the professional standards used by real Analytical Chemists – an impressive achievement and a fantastic showcase of their STEM capabilities.

Science Club

Year 7 have enjoyed an exciting term of festive, hands-on Science through a range of Christmas-themed experiments. Students created colourful snowflakes using chromatography, explored the fascinating properties of polymers by making fake snow, and most excitingly, investigated how fireworks work before making their own sparklers.



After half term, Year 7 Science Club will move on from Chemistry to explore new areas of Biology and Physics. As the world around us transitions into spring, this provides the perfect opportunity to investigate how living things adapt to their environments, building curiosity and scientific understanding beyond the laboratory.

From the Chaplaincy and RE Team

With both our Chaplains on maternity leave and the Chapel out of action due to building work you might think nothing is happening in our Chaplaincy; but you'd be wrong!

Since half term we have had a Mass for the Sixth Form, kindly celebrated by Fr James (Sacred Heart of Jesus and St Peter the Apostle, Waterloo), as well as a Community Mass for staff and local parishioners. Thanks go to Fr Andrew (St Colman's, Cosham) for celebrating this Community Mass with us, and to Martin Lewis (retired Oaklands staff) for providing some uplifting music to aid our singing.

On Wednesday 19th November Year 9 were joined by Fr Mark to celebrate their Year Mass, and on Friday 21st November we celebrated the Finale of the Jubilee Year of Hope proclaimed by Pope Francis for 2025. Have a look at the image of our [Jubilee Pledge](#) to see what we have achieved since January.

We also took time on and around 19th November to mark 'Red Wednesday'. This is an annual awareness-campaign organised by the Catholic charity Aid to the Church in Need (ACN). The purpose is to shine a light on Christians around the world who are persecuted or discriminated against for their faith. It involves actions such as wearing red, lighting buildings in red, praying, holding Masses, fundraising, and raising awareness in communities and schools. Red recalls and symbolises the blood of martyrs and suffering of those who bear witness to their faith under threat.

If you have time individually, as a family or community, please say the prayer below and remember those still suffering persecution for their faith.

Red Wednesday Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, we remember all who suffer for their faith in You. Strengthen the persecuted, comfort the fearful, and grant courage to those who stand firm in truth. May the witness of martyrs inspire us to live our faith with love and compassion.

We pray for peace, freedom, and justice for all people and all faiths.
Amen.

Mrs Palfreyman

PE Trip to Romania



Over the summer, our Year 10 basketball team travelled to Romania to take part in a training camp with CSO Voluntari. Students trained alongside Romanian U16 athletes, learning new techniques and approaches to the game while experiencing a different sporting culture.

The team also had the opportunity to explore Bucharest's historic Old Centre, hike in the Transylvanian Alps near Braşov, and visit the Ghighiu Orthodox Monastery, gaining insight into Romania's rich culture and traditions.

It was an unforgettable week of teamwork, learning, and friendship. Our sincere thanks to Mr Wade, Mr Dawson, and our partners at CSO Voluntari for their support and hospitality.

You can read the full report about the trip from Year 11 PE student, Rares [here](#)



Operation Christmas Child Update

We would like to congratulate our pupils who helped lead this year's Operation Christmas Child collection across Oaklands Catholic School. This initiative has become an important part of our Advent preparations and offers our students a meaningful way to support children living in very difficult circumstances around the world.



Working closely with pupils and staff from St Peter's, our students gathered donations of toiletries, toys, stationery and small treats from across the school community. These items were carefully packed into decorated shoeboxes, ready to be distributed to children who may otherwise receive no gifts at Christmas.

The collection at Oaklands was coordinated with great enthusiasm by Mr and Mrs Whelan supported by Mrs O'Connell from St Peter's, along with our Student President, Gabriel and his Vice, Aaron.

We extend our sincere thanks to all families who contributed and to the staff at St Peter's and Oaklands for their continued support of the Samaritan's Purse international relief charity. This project reflects the compassion, faith and community spirit we aim to nurture in all our students, and we are grateful to everyone who played a part.



Oaklands+ Programme

Our student leadership structure is designed to allow students to be actively involved in the everyday life of the college and school, thus allowing them to develop personally as well as making Oaklands a good place for all of us. They are guided by the school motto COMMUNITY – 'serve more, UNITY - 'love more, OPPORTUNITY - 'be more'.

In early November we invited Year 12 students to apply for the roles of Student President and Deputy and received several strong applications. Members of the Senior Leadership Team considered each application and after scrutiny, decided to appoint those who had applied to the different posts available according to the strength of their applications.

These are the new student leaders at Oaklands for this year:

President – Priyanka

Deputy President – Dalia

Charism Team Leaders – Ann Maria and Jimnah

Curriculum Team Leaders – Rachel and Ruby

Pastoral Team Leaders – Roselyn and Miriam

Co-Curriculum and Sixth Form Team Leaders – Isla and Laura

Secretaries – Thaaniya and Isai

This team is now going to start organising the many different events and activities for their fellow students. For example, s the Curriculum Team is working on setting up opportunities for Year 12 students to visit Year 9s to talk about GCSE option choices.

During our end of term Mass in December, all these students, together with the other Year 12 student leaders, were commissioned by Mrs Bonnington to undertake their new responsibilities.

We also take this opportunity to thank the outgoing student leadership team, led by Gabriel and Aaron, for the work they have done for our school over the last year. We wish them all the best in their forthcoming A Level Examinations.

Mr Sumba

From the new Student President and Deputy President:

Hello Oaklands!

We are truly delighted to have been given this responsibility to lead the student body and act as a voice for every student. The student leadership team as a collective, work together with teachers and other students to help raise concerns and bring new ideas, ensuring we follow the motto of 'love more, be more, serve more'. We strive to lead with their best interests at heart and are committed to making sure students' experiences during their time at Oaklands is unforgettable (in the best way possible!)

One of our goals is to look for ways that we can help improve the mental health of students. We recognise that this is a major problem in schools and hope that we can find ways to support our fellow students with this problem.

Academic success is highly important so we will always encourage students to reach out whenever they need help, we are always available to talk, may that be about revision tips, guidance in balancing your friendships as well as studies, the list goes on!

Another important thing to us, not just as President and Deputy, but as teenagers ourselves is the courage to speak and act from the heart, we will always encourage student to live with authenticity and never restrain from expressing themselves appropriately.

We have many projects coming forward, but we also want to hear from you! We can only act on what we know so please share suggestions and ideas with us, we value every contribution.

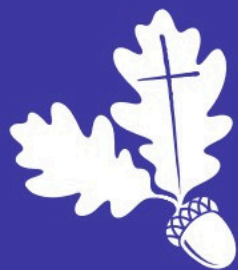
We are excited for our time as President and Deputy and know we are going to make this year fantastic!

Please do not hesitate to come find us or simply send us a Teams message:

Priyanka (12FOA) and Dalia (12CLW)

Love more, be more, serve more





THE SIXTH FORM

Oaklands Catholic School

The baubles are hung and the lights are twinkling on the Sixth Form Christmas tree as we approach the end of another busy and successful term.

We have recently enjoyed our fantastic Sixth Form Christmas Lunch which Mrs Dodds and the Catering team make so special each year.



As I write our Student Leaders are finalising the play lists for that tinsel riot which is the Christmas Show!

Here are just a few recent highlights.

Academic Success

We started this term by celebrating some of the best ever A Level results in the Sixth Form. This included a record number of passes with half of all grades being at the highest A*-B grade boundaries. We also exceeded national average with 85% of our students successfully securing their first-choice university place. These superb outcomes are testament to the hard work and dedication of our students, their teachers and the work of the Sixth Form Leads. Word of our success continues to spread and helps explain why we are once again experiencing a record number of internal and external applicants seeking to join our flourishing Sixth Form family in 2026!

Sixth Form Catholic Ethos - 'Love and Service'

Congratulations also to those Sixth Formers who decided to hold a Candy Cane Sale. They raised over £200 in a single day with their Candy Cane Sale! Thank you also to all those who purchased a gift bag and helped to raise this fabulous amount which will be donated, in full, to a local food bank charity.

We are very proud of you all and you epitomise the love and service at the heart of our Catholic ethos. Our success is rooted in this shared Catholic ethos and faith.

Our Christ centred Sixth Form came together this term in both a whole-school and for a special Sixth Form Mass which were beautiful occasions. Our Catholic ethos has also been evident in the fantastic work undertaken by the Student Leadership, especially those in the Sixth Form. From organising great events like Culture Week and the Oaklands Talent Christmas Show, through to mentoring younger students and undertaking duties, the Sixth Form Student Leaders are wonderful ambassadors. We also had a special end of term with an assembly and blessing of the Sixth Form by Fr. James from The Sacred Heart Church.

UCAS

We busily working to get all the UCAS applications sent off before Christmas and are way ahead of the official deadline in January. At the time of writing we have already sent off two-thirds of all the Year 13 applications and many have already received some superb university offers. We have also had ten students invited for Oxbridge interviews which is an unprecedented number. I am sure you will want to join me in wishing them the best of luck. A huge thank you to all those A Level teachers, Sixth Form tutors and Kelly for working so hard to get references written and checked in such good time.

Finally, it remains for me to wish you and your families every joy and peace this Christmas.

Mr Godwin, Director of Sixth Form

The Oaklands Way

The Catholic Church has Catholic schools because they believe that young people need to have an education that prepares them to live life in a certain way. While academic formation takes a prominent role, the way this is delivered is supposed to be in such a way that our young people learn about the intricacies of life as well and being given tools to help them approach life with a positive mind set – knowing that they have a role to play in making this world a better place for all.

Education in a Catholic school is about enabling young people to see that they have a mission to make this world a better place for themselves and others.

Our mission statement at Oaklands of Community Unity Opportunity tries to capture this aim of Catholic education.

One of our key tools for living out this call is by following The Oaklands Way. This is a weekly reflection on Scripture and Catholic Social Teaching principles that enable our young people to see the practical ways they can be a force for positive change.

For example, as we come to the end of term, we have been reflecting on the meaning of the Advent Scripture readings, and what they are asking us to do in preparation for Christmas.

Catholic Social Teaching - Human Dignity

In the section of Catholic Social Teaching, our focus has been on the principle of Respect for Human Dignity. This is because at Christmas, we celebrate the ultimate high point of human dignity; when the Divine became human – God incarnated, Word made flesh. We help our students reflect on the meaning of this event and its practical implications. What are we meant to do because of this belief?

The Oaklands Way gives us a platform to engage our students in thinking beyond just their lessons, but about life in general. It helps us ask the students the question, “...What kind of person do you want to be?” In a Catholic school, this is the most important question we pose to our young people.



Father,

We pray as a Christian Community, to be open to the gospel message of Jesus. We value the uniqueness of each other and, in respecting and supporting one another, celebrate the gifts we bring. In unity and love we will reach out to those in need. Guide us as we work to make prayer, love, healing, peace and justice a reality within our school.

Amen.





Oaklands Catholic School and Sixth Form College

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